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Exotic animal bylaw

Ringtail Ranch and Rescue
fear changes.
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Photo radar

Niagara may introduce red light/speed
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Wainfleet plans exotic animal bylaw

LAURA BARTON
Postmedia Network

As Wainfleet pushes forward with an exotic animal bylaw, Ringtail Ranch and Rescue fears its days may be numbered.

The township is one of the few municipalities left in Niagara that does not have such a bylaw. Mayor April Jeffs said it has come up in discussions.

"It's been suggested to us by the humane society on a couple different occasions," she said.

Working in conjunction with Welland and District Humane Society, Wainfleet's former bylaw officer Trevor Imhoff started putting local regulations together, Jeffs said.

Now a newly drafted exotic animal bylaw is coming before council, but current bylaw officer Mark Tardiff first wants public input.

"We don't want to be viewed as heavy-handed," this is what we're doing, like it or not," he said. "We want to try to work with the public."

Jeffs cheered the sentiment. "We want to do it right."

A public meeting on the proposal will take place Nov. 30 in Wainfleet's council chambers between 6 p.m. and 8 p.m.

Both Tardiff and a representative from the humane society will be present.

So, too, will be Mark Drysdale, owner of Ringtail Ranch and Rescue. Under the bylaw, an establishment like his, which rescues exotic animals from owners who underestimated their required care and then educates the public about them, will come under scrutiny.

People who own exotic animals before the bylaw passes will be grandfathered in and allowed to keep their animals, but will have to follow the bylaw and have proper certification if they intend to show their animals.

Showing its exotic animals is crucial for Ringtail.

"It's very important for people to realize what they've done and what's going on in this world," Drysdale said.

He said a bylaw for exotic animals is something Wainfleet needs because he feels people shouldn't be allowed to own ones such as tigers and monkeys.

But he doesn't agree with all of the details of the proposed bylaw, one he feels could shut the ranch's doors.

"This is 100 per cent against



NICHOLLE ALLENBERG/POSTMEDIA NETWORK

Ringtail Ranch and Rescue's Lawson, a 14-week-old Ringtail lemur hangs on to ranch owner Joni Cook as she tries to take photos of visitors.

us," he said, feeling it's connected to other issues the rescue operation has had with the township.

In August, the ranch closed to the public after letters were issued by Niagara's public health department over personal safety

and the township regarding a zoning violation.

They followed not long after a little girl was scratched by a lynx during an open house.

Tardiff said the bylaw isn't fuelled by the Garringer Road operation.

"This is a Wainfleet issue, this is not a Ringtail Ranch issue," he said.

It's also about the safety of the public and emergency service personnel, too, he said.

"Say there is a fire or ambulance has to go to the property,

we do forward this information to them so they do have that information on hand before they show up to the property," he said.

"There's nothing worse than walking into a house and you have this huge animal that you're not expecting to be just walking around."

Tardiff said Wainfleet's bylaw will be laid out during next Wednesday's meeting.

"We're going to present the bylaw, we'll go through every section of it, how it's going to affect people, what the benefits are if and then we're just going to answer questions," he said.

Other stipulations of the bylaw include no breeding or purchasing of exotic animals, registration of them with the township and a twice-yearly inspection of the owner's property to make sure the animal is being well taken care of. Prohibited animals will also be listed and discussed.

The bylaw and any amendments made based on public suggestions will be brought before council on Dec. 6. Residents will be able to speak there as well, although will have to go through the council clerk for a chance to do so.

Marineland faces five charges

JOHN LAW
Postmedia Network

Marineland has been charged with five counts of animal cruelty by the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (OSPCA), with further charges possible.

The charges against the Niagara Falls amusement park involve peacocks, guinea hens and black bears.

Responding to concerns about the animals, members of

the OSPCA and a veterinarian investigated the park Nov. 16.

No animals were removed, as investigators did not find them to be in immediate distress. But according to a statement released Friday afternoon, the animal welfare group "will be continuing to make sure that the animals are getting the care they require while this investigation is ongoing."

The charges are as follows:

— One count of failing to comply with prescribed stand-

ards of care, including failure to provide adequate food and water for a approximately 35 black bears;

— One count of permitting a peacock to be in distress;

— One count of failing to comply with prescribed standards of care for a peacock;

— Two counts of failing to comply with prescribed standards of care for guinea hens.

OSPCA spokeswoman Allison Crow said it is the first time to her knowledge the group

has levelled charges against Marineland.

In December 2012, the group issued six orders to the park after investigating allegations of neglect and animal abuse made by former employees and animal activists that summer.

By April 2013, all orders were complied with — including birth control for its bears and larger shelter for the elk — and the investigation was closed.

See MARINELAND on A5



NILE DIBARTISTA/POSTMEDIA NETWORK

The Marineland entrance in Niagara Falls.

What do **JAMES BROWN**, **GEORGE CLINTON** and **PRINCE** have in common?

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LOCAL NEWS

Niagara must decide if it wants photo radar

BILL SAWCHUK
Postmedia Network

Photo radar could be speeding your way soon.

Premier Kathleen Wynne announced last month the provincial government will introduce legislation that will give municipalities the power to install safety cameras near schools or busy intersections.

Whether that's a good idea depends on who you ask.

"I know they have yet to pass the legislation, but I'm OK with anything that makes it safer for our pedestrians, especially and children and seniors," Niagara Falls Mayor Jim Diodati said.

"There are times when people feel they just have to make that light, but public safety is more important. That's one thing we can all agree on."

"Running a red light or speeding in a school zone endangers everybody. It isn't worth the risk."

Under the proposed legislation, municipalities will be able to use the cameras to take pictures of licence plates of vehicles speeding or running red lights and mail a ticket to the owner. All the revenue would go to the municipalities.

Startup costs are high. Installing a fixed photo radar unit at an intersection will run a municipality anywhere from \$70,000 to \$100,000. Mobile units are just about as expensive.

"We will do a cost analysis, but you can't really put a cost on safety," Diodati said. "Ulti-



BOB TYMCZYK/POSTMEDIA NETWORK

St. Catharines may join the movement in Ontario that proposes traffic cameras be installed near schools.

mately, council will decide what to do.

"The way I understand it, all the revenue will come back to the municipality. It will be a self-funding initiative. The revenue will go back to pay for the cost of the cameras and operating them."

"We have some intersections in Niagara Falls — like Thorold Stone Road and Dorchester — where we have three crossing guards because of the volume of traffic."

Alberta is way ahead of Ontario when it comes to the cameras, which are fixtures at intersections in Edmonton and Calgary.

Edmonton began using what it calls automated traffic enforcement about 10 years ago.

A report to Edmonton city council detailed some of the costs of implementing the program.

Edmonton began by purchasing 29 units at a capital equipment cost of \$2.9 million for the police in 2008. Software to run the program cost about \$1 million. They expected to issue 150,000 tickets that first year. They ended up processing 218,286 tickets.

Edmonton liked it so much that by Year 3 of the program, 2010, it had 60 units operating on city streets.

While supporters of photo radar and red-light cameras are adamant they improve public safety, a study by the Frontier Centre for Public Policy found there is little credible evidence to support that assertion.

The report — called Speed or Greed: Does Automated Traffic Enforcement Improve Safety or Generate Revenue? — said the data shows there are more effective ways of reducing traffic violations and collisions.

The practices include better road design and improved road maintenance, adequate signage and speed limits more in tune with actual driving practices. Pierre Desrochers, an associate professor of geography at University of Toronto, and Hiroko Shimizu, a policy analyst based out of Rockwood, Ont., authored the paper.

"The city councils will be surprised at the costs," Shimizu said. "Usually, they don't give a lot of thought to ongoing costs. The software has to be maintained every year. The maintenance

costs accumulate."

Shimizu said a city could end up in a rat race. They must continue to generate more revenue to cover the growing costs of running the system.

"Operating a system like this involves many parties," Shimizu said. "The municipality can't do it on their own. They often have to hire a company to assess the records and assess the fines. Then they have to be prepared to go to court. The companies that sell the equipment tend not to tell the cities about the ongoing costs."

"Morally, the idea is commendable. People want to keep children and pedestrians safe, but practically, these methods won't reduce accident rates."

See RADAR on A11

IN BRIEF

Flipping the switch Dec. 1

The Niagara Falls Illumination Board will officially unveil its enhanced falls illumination project at a lighting ceremony today. The \$4-million revitalization project uses the latest technology to light the Horseshoe and American Falls.

The new system will provide twice the current lighting levels and allow for a full palette of colour combinations that wasn't available in the past.

The ceremony will begin at 5 p.m. at Queen Victoria Park with live entertainment on the concert stage at the illumination tower.

The falls will go dark at 6 p.m. and the enhanced lighting will be unveiled at 6:10 p.m., followed by a fireworks display at 6:25 p.m.

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POSTMEDIA

Let's do a memorial garden right, or not at all



ALLAN
BENNER

I'm often at Brock University these days, giving my daughter a ride to classes there.

And for the past year or so, I've been greeted by the striking figure of the university's namesake, Maj.-Gen. Sir Isaac Brock, standing at the base of Schmon Tower.

It's a phenomenal addition to the campus.

Rather than sculpt the war hero charging into battle with his sword drawn like so many other statues of historic figures, Edmonton artist Danek Modzenski instead chose to depict Brock in a way that is better suited to the academic pursuits of the university.

"I wanted to show the energy of his intellect, the energy of his will, his decisiveness," Modzenski said in a 2015 article about the sculpture. "The clarity of his

investigation into things as they are because that resulted in the actions that he undertook."

There is, however, one aspect of the statue that makes me laugh when I see it.

I have no doubt that the hat depicted in the statue is precisely how Brock's hat looked. People wore some pretty weird headwear back then. But from my perspective, it looks like a giant taco topped with a pineapple.

And when I'm dropping off my daughter, I usually crack a pineapple joke or two before she can get out of the car.

Recent discussions in Welland have left me wondering: As impressive as that statue of Brock is, how unimpressive would it be if there was no statue of Brock standing beside that pineapple taco? What if the only thing mounted on that pedestal in Isaac Brock Plaza was a bronze sculpture of his hat?

Two years ago, Welland announced that a pair of bronze cowboy boots would be commissioned as a focal point of a new memorial gar-



Welland's 2014 plan to display a pair of bronze cowboy boots at Market Square in honour of Welland's late MPP, Peter Kormos, is akin to mounting Brock's hat on a pedestal and leaving out the guy who wore it.

den at Market Square. That idea bothered me from the start.

While it's wonderful to honour our much-loved and sadly-missed MPP Peter Kormos

who died in March 2013, a sculpture of his boots falls way short of representing the

man that he was.

Last week I was relieved to learn that plans for those boots may well be scrapped.

I'm sure the idea was developed with the best of intentions, but if we're going to do something like that, let's do it right or not at all.

The Vallants Memorial near Confederations Square in Ottawa is an example of how to do it right. The monument, unveiled in 2006, includes the busts of key people from Canada's military history mounted on pedestals, and it's extremely impressive.

Obviously, Welland can't afford to do something to that extent. However, depending on the success of the city's fundraising efforts, maybe we could start with a bust or two, or three, of a few worthy Wellanders, such as Kormos.

A sculpture of a pair of cowboy boots – however shiny – is akin to putting a sculpture of a pineapple taco in front of Schmon Tower.

And Peter deserved much better than that.

ABenner@postmedia.com
Twitter: @benner1

I've been thinking about Christ the only foundation

PASTOR GARY TOMYOK
Wainfleet Congregational
Christian Church

When I was a teenager many years ago, we lived in our lake front home and we built a boat-house near the lake.

We used large bricks, we made concrete for the footings, we even placed steel reinforcing rods on the roof and inside the walls. This boathouse stood the test of many storms. You can probably guess what happened one day – it came down. But it wasn't the result of one major storm, rather it was the cumulative effect of many storms over time and the steady undermining from the relentless waves

under it that shifted the foundation until the roof collapsed.

The bottom line, we built the boathouse to close to the lake and we did not dig deep enough.

The familiar story in Matthew 7:24-27 first speaks negatively of those who do not and positively of those who do put God's word into practice in the here and now. The resultant testing that will follow at the end of time.

If you back up to verse 21 you can see the full context of this passage as it refers to saying and doing the will of God. (James 1:22).

"Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves, do what it says."

What words? In Matthew 7:24 Jesus says "these words of mine"

This vivid story is a study in contrast. Outwardly, each house looks strong and secure in good weather, but that is where the similarity ends.

Beep, this is a test an emergency, a great storm is on its way – two builders, two homes, two different results. The first person was a wise man, the second person was a foolish man.

How did the first person build their house? On the rock. The wise man digs deep, he has great foresight and he plans ahead. The rainy season will be coming, the storms, flood, wind and rain. Come what may, he is pre-

pared for all of it and has a solid foundation.

The foolish man does not put God's word into practice, he builds his house on sand and when the storms come it falls with a mighty crash.

How can we solidify our spiritual house? We can freely utilize the steel reinforcing rods of discipline, prayer, praise, and the help of others. And most important of all Jesus, the chief cornerstone, stabilizes any foundation by holding it all together.

"See, I lay a stone in Zion a tested stone, a precious foundation."

Every Hebrew understood the importance of the cornerstone. It also determines the lay of the

walls and the dimensions of the structure. Palestine is known for torrential rains that can turn valleys into raging torrents. What will reveal the quality of each builder? Storms always do because you can't see the foundation of a building. But through many storms the roots go down deeper. Our hearts are also hidden, but deep God given faith will sustain you in any storm. Only the foolish will stumble over the stone. Those who build on Him (the wise) will never be put to shame. (See Isaiah 8:14).

Doing what the word of God says is a process of being built and shaped into living stones – that is not a contradiction in terms. We are involved in

the building process as well as the apostle Paul who was a wise builder. Paul said that He was an expert builder, a master craftsman and a chief engineer. How can Christians be certain they will pass the test? Paul told Timothy his young understudy God's solid foundation stand firm sealed with this inscription, "The Lord knows those who are His" (2 Timothy 2:19).

How can you have this blessed assurance in the here and now? Believe that Christ is your rock, your fortress, the only rock in whom you take refuge the rock of ages. You need not that breasting emergency alert of the oncoming storms.

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OSPCA charges are a further sign of 'paradigm shift'

MARINELAND from A2

Earlier this year, the OSPCA was back at the park investigating a complaint about the treatment of its beluga whales. Concerns were raised following hidden-camera footage obtained in the summer of 2015 by L.A.-based group Last Chance for Animals, in which a group member was hired as a summer employee.

Marineland was cleared of the charges, and the park blasted the group's video as a "hate-filled rant." It said the allegations were "completely and knowingly false."

Marineland responded to the new OSPCA charges Friday in a statement, claiming they come from a complaint by a former employee "who was fired for poor performance and inappropriate behaviour."

The park said one peacock, "out of thousands of birds," had an issue with its eye and is receiving "full and appropriate medical treatment" from Marineland's

veterinarian.

Regarding the guinea hens, the park said the birds "did not respond well" to the sudden intrusion of inspectors in their pen.

None were unhealthy or needed medical treatment, and they have been given an additional area for shelter.

As for the bears, Marineland said the OSPCA's issue stemmed from one or more small adhesive labels attached to the food finding its way into the diet of fish, fruit and vegetables.

"Occasionally, a label is missed. That is regrettable but it does not pose any risk to the bears."

Former Marineland employee Phil Demers, an outspoken critic of the park, said Friday's charges "validate" everyone who has raised concerns about animal welfare at the facility.

Demers is especially intrigued by the charges related to birds, since they are not animals on display for the public yet. He said

they relate to a "future aviary" under development.

Demers worked at the park from 2000 to 2012.

He is being sued by Marineland for \$1.5 million, one of nine lawsuits the park has launched since 2012 when he and other employees came forward with allegations of animal abuse and neglect.

None of the lawsuits against former employees, activists and media organizations have gone to trial yet.

Demers said the OSPCA charges are a further sign of the "paradigm shift" against parks using captive animals and marine life.

"None of this is news to anyone that works at Marineland, none of this is news to anyone in the immediate community surrounding Marineland," he said. Cross said the investigation, which began Nov. 10, is "still an open and ongoing investigation."

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Safety village holiday shopping for a toonie

LAURA BARTON
Postmedia Network

Children had the chance to go shopping for mom, dad and their siblings on Saturday without having to head into the chaos that is shopping malls at this time of the year.

Niagara Safety Village in Welland had its Christmas Shopping at the Village event, and this year included a Children's Christmas Shop.

"Most kids can't go out shopping by themselves," said executive director Shirley Cordner. "They have to have mum and dad, where in here they can come in without mum and dad and go shopping."

While the upstairs rooms in the main building at the safety village were full of vendors selling items such as handmade kid's clothes and Scentys, one of the rooms downstairs had a number of tables set up.

On the tables were a variety of items from kid's toys, household items, books and socks children could choose from. For the



LAURA BARTON/POSTMEDIA NETWORK

Addison Waite, 4, wraps presents for her parents at Niagara Safety Village, where she picked them out at the Christmas shopping event.

price of a toonie, the kids could pick an item and then volunteers helped them wrap and tag

the gift.

Four-year-old Addison Waite was one of the children who eagerly looked over the tables to find gifts for her parents. While the volunteer handled the finer details of the wrapping, Addison was all over filling in the "to" and "from" on the gift tag.

Her mom, Michelle Silk, said Addison likes the activity of shopping and wrapping the gifts.

She said she heard about the event at Niagara College, where she works as a project co-ordinator with the centre for professional and organizational development.

"I just thought it would be a great opportunity to come out and allow the kids to pick out some presents for grandparents or themselves or whoever they wanted to buy for," she said.

Her son Grayson Waite, 6, was also busy picking and wrapping gifts.

Silk said she went on Facebook to tell other moms about

the event to encourage them to come out. She called it an "incredible event."

By 11 a.m., one hour into the event, one of the tables was already cleared of items.

Cordner said she got the idea for the event from when her sons, now adults, were in school. She said their schools had a similar event and the kids were always excited to get to shop.

Apart from that, she said there is also the need for this kind of event at this time of the year.

"This is just a rough time of the year for these families when you have to choose between food and hydro and what do you do for Christmas," she said. "So this way the kids can put something under the tree for mum and dad and brother and sister."

Seeing the response to the event this year, Cordner said it will be back next year and plans to expand it as well.

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Wainfleet gathering input for strategic plan

LAURA BARTON
Postmedia Network

Wainfleet residents had a chance to give input into the township's strategic plan on Sunday morning.

Tim Dobbie, president of Tim L. Dobbie Consulting Ltd., and his associate Nancy Johnson manned the table and information boards set up in the arena and answered any questions.

"This is their plan and it's in draft form right now," said Dobbie, gesturing to the boards. "Council has asked us to come out to different places and get public input."

The plan outlines a vision and mission statement for the township, which both touch on sustainability while preserving its rural traditions.

The key points of the plan focus on economic development, community stewardship and communication.

Dobbie described community stewardship as "how you are providing things in your community." Discussions about waterfront use, agriculture and signage fall under this.

He said waterfront concerns he's heard have had to do with public versus private areas and how to deal with that.

"Public access to the waterfront, places to park, washrooms and then how do you do that and yet ensure that people stay in the public portion of it and not to the private" are among the things residents want to know when it comes to the waterfront.

Another way water is being looked at is with regards to the potential of a municipal water supply.

"You have regional municipalities like West Lincoln that are being serviced by sewer lines and water lines through the region, but this municipality doesn't want to see that, they want to keep their rural lifestyle," Dobbie said.

Within the first three hours of being at the arena, he said, maybe a dozen people had come through, but he expects more people

will be out at the strategic plan open house in the community hall on Tuesday.

He said it's important for residents to give their input in situations such as this because councillors are listening.

"We show them everything we get," he said.

In his role as a consultant, he will be taking everything he heard and putting it side-by-side with the drafted plan council has laid out. While comparing the plan and the input, he will ask what council would like to keep or what it would like to change.

"Most councils do a little bit of both, particularly if there seems to be common ground."

Residents can fill out an online survey at wainfleet.ca or call the township at 905-859-3463.



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French students aid Haiti

MICHELLE ALLENBERG
Postmedia Network

Christmas is a time for giving. Naomie Cesar knows not everyone is lucky enough to receive.

The Welland woman says the aftermath of Hurricane Matthew in October is still being felt throughout her home country of Haiti.

"They are still having flooding ... it's been raining constantly," she says.

"I saw kids that are dying of cholera ... So I feel like I need to reach out to them," Cesar says.

Since the hurricane hit in early October, Cesar has visited the country to distribute medicine. During her trip she felt more needed to be done, so when she arrived back in Welland she began to collect items to help.

Two of Cesar's children attend Nouvel Horizon in Welland, so she reached out to the school for assist-

ance. Cesar said she gained support from Lynn Hadley, co-president of the school board. With the help of students and staff, Cesar was able to fill five large boxes with school supplies, clothing and toys.

"We thought it was a good gesture to do for Haiti. Because it was school-related we more so concentrated on school materials and hygiene," Hadley says.

Hadley visited each classroom of the French elementary school to teach students the history of Haiti and why the country needs help.

She says it was important to get the school involved because not only is there a Haitian population at the school, but also because the school gives back to organizations and causes each year.

"When we see that there is a need, as much as the parent council is there to help the kids, we also think

it is important to reach out to the community," Hadley says.

For Hadley, having children of any age aware of social issues is important to show them how lucky they are in Canada.

She says the collection acts as a good educational tool as well, because not everyone is exposed to what happens in other parts of the world.

Cesar says she is "so grateful" for the help she received from the school and other community members.

The school gave so much that Cesar must wait to ship some of the boxes in January.

She will be visiting Haiti for eight days, leaving Dec. 21. She will distribute the supplies and toys to a handful of cities that have been impacted by the hurricane.

Allenberg@postmedia.com
Twitter: @M_Allenberg



MICHELLE ALLENBERG/POSTMEDIA NETWORK

Naomie Cesar sorts through one of five boxes of toys and supplies collected to be shipped to Haiti. She will visit the country in December to distribute the items to those affected by Hurricane Matthew.


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Advocates say technology will enhance safety

RADAR FROM A3

"How many children die in school zones? Statistically, it is almost zero, and the evidence is that speed doesn't kill in these instances. It is driver error that kills people. There is no evidence speed cameras work. There are better ways for a city to use its resources. It is a waste."

The paper said the automated programs have the potential to create "perverse incentives and conflicts of interests" over revenue generation, especially when municipal and police budgets are facing shortfalls.

The paper said taking a dangerous driver's photo does not change their behaviour, nor does photo enforcement remove seriously impaired or otherwise dangerous drivers from the road when they are a threat to others.

In Edmonton, the city, which took over the program from police in 2013, faced a backlash from angry drivers after dropping the threshold for a ticket to as little as 10 km/h over the speed limit.

In the aftermath, the number of tickets issued tripled — through city officials denied changes in the enforcement policy were to blame.

"A deliberate attempt to make traffic enforcement towards drivers the majority of careful drivers — rather than dangerous individuals — can only result in growing distrust towards government authorities and politicians," the paper said.

Ontario has been down this road before.

In 1993, Bob Rae's NDP government launched a photo radar pilot project on 400-series highways with four infamous white vans parked at the side of the road. The machines generated 3,273 tickets in the first month, giving the government an estimated \$365,000 in fine revenue.

By the end of the year, photo radar had surpassed \$2 million in ticket fines.

In 1995, Tory leader Mike Harris used ending photo radar as part of a campaign platform that helped him become premier. As soon as it was elected, the Harris government ended photo radar, saying it would replace it with cops in cruisers.

Niagara Regional Police Chief Jeff McGuire said photo radar would be the responsibility of the local municipalities in Niagara Region overall. He said his officers would assist the municipalities in identifying high traffic areas and school areas where there have been complaints. That would be the extent of police involvement.

"I support it in the manner it is being proposed," McGuire said. "I wasn't a fan of the previous run at photo radar

in Ontario. At that point, I felt it was a cash grab."

"I think red-light cameras are appropriate. I also think the speed detection cameras in community safety zones, or school zones in particular, are appropriate."

"There is no reason whatsoever to be speeding in a school zone, especially when they are timed for when the kids are in school."

"As far as processing paperwork or dealing with the issues or tickets, it is not a policing function. It will be under the Highway Traffic Act, but the tickets won't be coming from us."

Welland Mayor Frank Campion said it is too early to comment in depth. He said he wanted to wait to see what the provincial legislation says before committing one way or the other.

"We would have to look at it and the costs associated with it, as well as the impact," Campion said. "It is something that deserves further inquiry — with staff, the police, and interested parties."

"We will also have to look at the impact on drivers and school zones. At first blush, the answer would be yes, but we will need more details."

"It really shouldn't be about making money. It should be about creating a safer environment. If it is revenue neutral, that would be good, but it shouldn't turn into a pile of money."

The City of St. Catharines is taking a wait-and-see approach. Julie Rorison, Mayor Walter Szendzik's assistant, said city staff is reviewing the announcement by the province and will report to council in more detail once the legislation is passed. Before any photo radar or red-light cameras would be considered on St. Catharines streets, it would have to come to city council and/or regional council for consideration, Rorison said.

"If and when the law is passed, the city would work with the NRP and other partners to identify needs and opportunities to improve community safety — but there are no plans to implement it at this time," she said.

Police administer the program in Calgary.

Red-light cameras are activated when a vehicle remains in an intersection for a set amount of time after the light turns red.

The speed cameras are triggered when a passing vehicle exceeds the speed limit.

Vehicle photos are taken (from either the rear or both the front and rear), and the system registers and stores data including the date, time, location and speed of the vehicle. A trained and qualified officer reviews every image to verify the vehicle is in violation, and the vehicle information is correct. Tickets are then mailed to registered owners.

Alex Pedersen, a spokesperson for CAA Niagara, said the organization supports the introduction of the cam-

eras.

"We don't really see a downside to it," she said. "With photo radar, we aren't really looking for widespread use. What the efforts will do is help protect children in school zones — and complement existing efforts that are in place."

"At the CAA, we have had a long-term advocacy around school-zone safety. Photo radar and red-light cameras will enhance that safety."

"What we are really talking about here is changing behaviour."

"There will be a huge legislation process. One thing we are really hopeful for is that they are giving municipalities a chance to empower themselves and decide if it is necessary. Some intersections are busier than others. It's a good place to start to push that behavioural change."

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BOB TYMCZYK/STYX/POSTMEDIA NETWORK

St. Catharines may join the movement in Ontario that proposes traffic cameras be installed near schools.

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Button aids cat rescued on Hwy. 406

MARYANNE FIRTH
Postmedia Network

The cat that was rescued after being thrown from a moving vehicle on Highway 406 will soon be looking for a loving home.

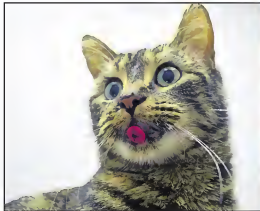
Ellie — named after Steven Ellis, the passerby who came to her aid — underwent surgery last Wednesday and is expected to make a full recovery from her injuries.

Lincoln County Humane Society and Ontario Provincial Police are still appealing to witnesses in hopes of identifying the vehicle the feline came from.

The incident occurred in the southbound lanes of the highway between Beaverdams Road and Highway 20 in Thorold just before 9 a.m. Tuesday Dec. 15.

Ellis said he was driving at the time when he witnessed "something dark" come out of the driver's side window of a vehicle up ahead, landing on the highway's centre median.

The vehicle continued on and the driver has yet to be identified.



SUPPLIED PHOTO

Ellie, a cat rescued after being thrown from a moving vehicle on Highway 406, is in recovery and expected to be placed up for adoption Dec. 5. A button was used during a special procedure to reattach skin to her jaw.

Ellis stopped and discovered the feline in need of medical attention.

The cat, now in the care of Huntingdon Animal Hospital,

had skin ripped from her jaw and paw. One of her claws was also ripped out.

See RESCUE on A15

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LOCAL NEWS

'It's unusual, but I think it's pretty ingenious'

RESCUE from A13

She did not suffer any internal injuries.

A rare procedure was used to repair Ellie's unusual facial injury.

Her lip was stitched back to her jaw using a button to ensure the area will hold together and properly heal, said LCHS executive director Kevin Strooband.

"It's unusual, but I think it's pretty ingenious," he said of the button, which is expected to be removed in the next few days.

With her chin now adorned with a hot pink ornament, Ellie is in recovery and has so far been faring well, he said.

It has not impeded her ability to eat — treats in particular.

Strooband said both the shelter and the animal hospital have received many phone calls inquiring about adoption, as well as a number of donations to assist with the \$1,000 medical bill.

Depending on her recovery, Ellie is expected to be placed up for adoption Dec. 5.

Because of the interest in taking her home, applications will be accepted

from Dec. 5 to Dec. 7 before a decision is made.

The successful applicant will be selected by random draw, subject to a background check.

The humane society has received a handful of leads regarding the incident and is checking into each one, Strooband said.

He urged the public to come forward with any tips regarding the cat, its owner or the vehicle involved.

OPP Sgt. Kerry Schmidt said the service has received "a lot of tips through social media," but none to date have led to the vehicle or the owner.

"We're not any closer to knowing who actually did that to the cat," he said, while encouraging anyone with information to step forward.

The vehicle involved in the incident is described as a grey van or crossover. The licence plate number is not known.

Anyone with information can contact the shelter at 905-882-0767 or the Niagara detachment of the OPP.

mfrth@postmedia.com
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SUPPLIED PHOTO

Ellie, a cat rescued after being thrown from a moving vehicle on Highway 406, is in recovery and expected to be placed up for adoption Dec. 5.

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LOCAL NEWS

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Official of the Niagara Region Police Service (NRPS) officers, managers and members are authorized to collect this information. The NRPS of the Incorporated Police Service is located at 400 St. John Street, 10th Floor, Toronto, Ontario, M5S 2S4 and may be contacted by calling 416-393-4173 or 1-877-414-4173.

Niagara Regional Police will begin issuing receipts after street checks beginning in the new year.

Receipt passes for police street checks

MARYANNE FIRTH
Postmedia Network

Citizens who are stopped for a street check by police may walk away with a receipt in hand in the new year.

The Niagara Regional Police services board approved the document last Thursday that corresponds with new provincial legislation set to take effect Jan. 1.

"If we're collecting personal information from people and it fits within the boundaries of the legislation then we're obligated to provide a receipt to the person," police Chief Jeff McGuire said.

A street check occurs when a police officer approaches someone and strikes up a conversation. The officer asks for identification and records the details electronically, with information entered into a database.

Under new regulations, it will be mandatory for officers to inform the person of their right not to provide identification. The police must give a person a reason for the stop. It cannot be arbitrary.

The new rules also mandate police provide a receipt with the officer's name and badge number if requested.

The receipt developed by Niagara police will provide its recipient with the name and badge number of the officer that conducted the check, as well as the occurrence number, date, time and location.

McGuire said a receipt was expected to be developed by the provincial government before 2017 to ensure consistency is maintained across Ontario.

If we're collecting personal information from people and it fits within the boundaries of the legislation then we're obligated to provide a receipt to the person."

Police Chief Jeff McGuire

"But that hasn't happened yet, so we had to be in a position to do this," he said of the police service creating its own document.

"We're satisfied that this receipt we developed here will satisfy the legislation. We need to have it in place for the first of the year and the province hasn't come through."

If a provincial receipt does come forward before the end of the year, it will instead be used.

Board member David Barrick wanted to ensure the public would be made aware of the coming change.

McGuire assured public education will be undertaken.

"We can put something out locally to ensure people understand. We'll put something out before the end of the year."

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Niagara Whalers Jr. A Hockey Team

PORT COLBORNE'S NIAGARA WHALERS HOCKEY TEAM SUCCESSFUL BOTH ON AND OFF THE ICE

Port Colborne's Niagara Whalers Jr. A hockey club of the Greater Metro Jr. A Hockey League all atop the league standings in 1st place. It seems this success is starting to bring the Port Colborne hockey faithful out to the Vale Health and Wellness Centre in droves. With players like Matt Hore (Oshawa Generals, Caidonia Canvans 100 pts. last season), Tyler Hore (Oshawa Generals, Samia Sting, Sault Ste. Marie Greyhounds, Chicago Blackhawks camp invitee), Tyler Jackson (Niagara Ice Dogs, St. Catharines Falcons 'A'), Andy Robinson (Buffalo Jr. Sabres), Manny Manns (St. Catharines Falcons, Port Erie Meteors), Zack Lamsfield (Mississauga Chargers, Niagara Falls Canucks 'A'), and a star studded line-up of experienced players that have graduated from the OHL, QJHL, GOJHL, local AAA teams, and European elite leagues, together with veteran former Niagara Canucks' head coach, Terry Masterson of the helm, it is no wonder the skill, talent, and coaching of this team has lead them to 1st place, and increasing attendance at their games.

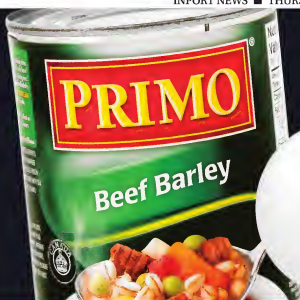
Niagara Whalers' home games at the Vale Centre in Port Colborne not only allows one to see arguably the best hockey team in the Niagara area outside the Ice Dogs. It is also turning into an event like no other. The team has pre-game player introductions before the game complete with fog, spotlights, Minions mascots, team banners, free pizza for the kids, and an array of prizes and other give-aways. It is truly a fun atmosphere, and one that keeps bringing the crowds back to the Vale Centre every Friday night. The team provides free tickets, and free pizza to children and students who follow them on their Facebook page, as well as 2-for-1 adult tickets to those who follow them on Facebook. Adult tickets are only \$6. Where else can one take their family out for \$6, and feed the kids with free pizza? Next home game is this Friday, Dec 2nd, the Whalers look on the former 1st place team, London Lakers, looking to reclaim their recently lost 1st place title from the newly crowned Whalers, game time is 7:30.

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